

# Please Don't Make Me Touch 'Em: Towards a Critical Race Fanonianism as a Possible Justification for Violence against Whiteness

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## Introduction

Despite the pursuit of both civil rights in the United States and human rights violations against the United States under international law, racism, poverty, and the murder of Black citizens endure. While the pursuit of non-violence has a long historical root in the snail paced civil rights gains of African people in America, there has also been a historical conversation that revolved around the use of violence as a means to secure freedom from racial oppression and the dehumanization of the United States' racial colonization.

According to Phillip Aka, "international human rights instruments recognize and 'guarantee' . . . 'the rights of peoples' or collectivities."<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, neither the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), or the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which both include the rights of collectives, have been deemed enforceable on the United States' interpretation of constitutional or civil rights laws, despite the United States' ratification of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD).<sup>2</sup> Previous works have considered the

use of violence for self defense<sup>3</sup> and as a means to gain civil and political rights in the United States,<sup>4</sup> but none have analyzed the use of violence against whites as a necessary step towards the elimination of racism against African descended people in America.

According to Article I of the ICESCR, "All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development."<sup>5</sup> In the United States, however, Black Americans have never enjoyed or been able to secure their self-determination. White racism, Black poverty, and the systematic incarceration of African descended people in America have rendered the ability of Blacks to determine their own economic, social and cultural development virtually impossible. While it is beyond the scope of this essay to argue that the United States' non-compliance with the various international conventions on race justify African American violence against whites, it is immensely important to recognize that the cause that African descended people are fighting for in America has been recognized by the international community. Despite the international community's criticisms of U.S. racism and the denial of self-determination to people of African descent, there have not been any political sanctions or international reprimands for these human rights violations. As such, African people in the United States must start to speak of and act on political alternatives that are not rooted in the eventuation of white sympathy for the "human condition" of Blacks; instead, our political theories must deal with the reality of white imperialism and the apathy of the international community to the concretization of Black self-determinacy.

In an attempt to move Black political theory in this direction, this essay explores the use of violence as a solution to the permanent institutionalization and white cultural reification of anti-Black racism. In African American political thought, integration and the hopes of non-violent progress has become the unquestioned foundation of Black political and legal theory. This author believes that the dogmatic allegiance to non-violence is a price that African descended people in America can no longer afford to pay. Historically, the use of violence has been a serious option in the liberation of African people from the cultural tyranny of whiteness, and should again be investigated as a plausible and in some sense necessary political option. Violence as a liberatory act both incorporates the use of violence as merely a means of self-defense, while going beyond it. I am not speaking of violent acts that are limited to specific incidences of "attacks" by the KKK or racist police, nor am I trying to justify the indiscriminate killing of white individuals. I am speaking of violence as an earnest attempt to respond to the murder of African descended people at the hands of white institutions, and the

materialization of the discontent African descended people carry with them daily against the set of societal norms that maintain that white lives are more valuable than Black lives. Through an adoption of the racial realist lens, I am interested in knowing if a case can be made that violence against whites is the only solution to anti-Black racism.

As any African scholar in America knows, there will inevitably be critiques of entertaining such a question. To some, for a Black scholar to even ask if violence should be used to combat racism is a career faux pas, but to not ask the question presupposes an illusory intellectual allegiance to a social political context for change and to a resolution of the American race problem that does not exist. For Critical Race Theory<sup>6</sup> and African-centered analysis to move forward in fields traditionally not exposed to these analyses (such as the humanities, and the social sciences), we must move beyond ideology; both the ideology that supposes a dogmatic incompatibility between the modern world and the African world and the ideology that operates as if the conditions of post-civil rights integration form the only possibilities in the world through which liberatory action can be taken.<sup>7</sup> The evidence of the last fifty years has convincingly demonstrated the failure of multi-cultural coalitions, civil rights legislation and integration. The current task of radical Black thought now rests in the development of alternatives in light of this disappointment.

Inevitably white scholars will see the positing of such a question driven by anti-white racism, but it is only the failure to ask the question under the empirical conditions of white domination and in fear of white reprimand that one would silence a potential political strategy which in itself is the result of the historically more vicious anti-Black racist context. For example, discussions of violence are routinely entertained by legal theorists, politicians, religious leaders and military strategists. Why is this project any different? This project arises from the questions posed by Critical Race Theorists asking about the role of self-defense in an American society that has a dismal record of protecting Black populations and staving off genocide.<sup>8</sup> Given the recent scholarly debates over the role of violence and just war theory in securing freedom and democracy,<sup>9</sup> it seems only appropriate that these political questions be put up for discussion in the quest for racial equality and justice. I say this to point out that the investigation of violence as a means of liberation and protecting the "peoplehood" of African descended people should be dealt with as a serious political question, rather than an ideological and emotional manifesto, as is usually the case when white scholars claim to work on race, or Black philosophers acquiesce the call for diversity in philosophy by compelling more racial compassion and understanding. Political theory in general

and violence in particular have been under-theorized as an outgrowth of Black discontent and have failed to be justified on specific Black experiences of racism. Traditional philosophical investigations into violence still look to Enlightenment thinkers to establish a universal criterion of violent revolt, despite the involvement of Enlightenment thinkers like John Locke, John Stuart Mills, Immanuel Kant and Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel in the endorsement of the particularizing category of race. This article differs in that it appeals to the authoritative experiences of Black people in America and is not swayed by the qualitative difference of white opinions or white perceptions of anti-Black racism. As it stands now, the theorization of Black political thought is based on the comfort whites have with the options proposed for Black liberation. This project exists in a different vein; the justifications for violence, as they are articulated in this work, are legitimate to the extent that people of African descent experience oppression and deem it intolerable. Simply stated, the aim of this article is not to persuade whites of the reality of anti-Black racism, rather this article aims to introduce the conversation of violence as a possible alternative to the failed integrationist project of the 1960s to Black scholars, not as a call to arms, but as an open ended political question.

My goal in this project is to provide an argument for a Critical Race Fanonism that reads the peoplehood of African descended people in America into Fanon's project of decolonization. In section I, I argue that Hurricane Katrina provides insight into the white racial framing of the race problem in America in such a way that exposes both the permanent racist context of the United States political system and the refusal of the white population to constructively engage the race question. Given the epistemological frame of white racial identity, I am trying to question if it is the case that the only way to end racism is to challenge the existence of those whose breaths of life sustain the racist structure. Section II utilizes Derrick Bell's Racial Realism and Fanon's cultural analysis of colonization to create what I take to be a Critical Race Fanonian perspective on racism in the United States. I argue that the racial situation in the United States, being both of psycho-cultural permanence and colonial structure, demands the consideration of radical decolonization as a solution. Lastly, I am interested in philosophy's role in constructively engaging the question of racial oppression.

## **I. What Does Hurricane Katrina Tell Us about Anti-Black Racism?**

On August 29, 2005, the gravest natural disaster of the century landed on the shores of Louisiana. In Hurricane Katrina's fury, eighty percent of the minority population was displaced,<sup>10</sup> and in its aftermath the death and dehumanization of

a newly formed “refugee population” highlighted an enduring racial legacy<sup>11</sup> that continues to cost African descended people in America their lives. Despite the disproportionate death and suffering of people of color, especially poor Southern Blacks, many white Americans failed to attribute racism to the slow government response or the conditions of Southern Blacks in New Orleans.<sup>12</sup> According to Jon Hansen and Kathleen Hanson, “Americans witnessed two types of injustices in the wake of Katrina. First, a group of innocent Americans were suffering; yet the governmental response seemed altogether inefficient and indifferent . . . and second, as we watched and processed the reports on hurricane recovery, most of us began to notice an obvious but unsettling fact: the people of New Orleans were . . . well . . . third-worldish.”<sup>13</sup> The realization of this obvious fact also brought race to the forefront of the white imagination, but no sooner than the thought appearing to the white mind, it disappeared in favor of racial stereotypes that blamed Black laziness for the poverty they suffered, Black inferiority for the ill-advised choice to stay in New Orleans during the hurricane, and Black savagery for the theodic suffering of the people.<sup>14</sup> In the minds of most whites, the suffering, poverty and death of Blacks in Katrina are actually justified as the moral punishment of God.<sup>15</sup>

To maintain positive self conceptions in the face of evidence that convincingly demonstrates injustice, whites invoke counter-examples to reaffirm their self worth. This blame frame allows whites to “perceive justice in the face of oppression, coercion and injustice.”<sup>16</sup> These delusions are at the base level psycho-cultural rationalizations that maintain the systemic apparatuses that sustain Black oppression and white supremacy. This “racial framing” of the world provides not only the justifications for the oppression of African peoples, but also the rationalizations needed for the ethical abrogations most whites use in denying people of African descent moral concern. The possession of a white racial (ist) identity and a systemic complacency toward the atrocities committed to preserve white domination makes whites responsible both as participants and sideliners of racial domination. As Hanson and Hanson state,

Intentional oppression is, sadly, not a prerequisite for injustice. Racial oppression has long thrived in this country, *despite* claimed good intentions and justified attitudes, policies, and practices. Believing that most promoters of racial injustice in America have not judged others by the “content of their character” is a fundamental mistake. Character judgments, in fact, have long served as a principal justification for oppression. Our mistake is, not in neglecting character, but in attributing to “character” what should

be attributed to the victim's situation and, in turn, to our system and ourselves.<sup>17</sup>

While some philosophers may see Hurricane Katrina as an event to investigate under the various experiences of oppression, resistance theories or Marxist lens of race, class and gender, the disproportionate deaths and suffering of African people in America convincingly demonstrate that the philosophical intellectualization common in dealing with race as a social construct fails to protect African descended lives or change the socio-economic conditions that maintain the political and social vulnerability of Blacks. The persistent "framing" of Blacks under ethical rationalizations of whites that maintain Black oppression convincingly demonstrate that other strategies for social change must be entertained. The framing of Black suffering as the starting point of white conversations dealing with race is in fundamental opposition to the interests of African descended people in America; it is no longer acceptable to philosophically converse and politically pontificate legal strategies that are built on the possibility of whites abandoning white privilege, when it is the passivity and acceptance of Black deaths that give these conversations with whites moral suasion. In other words, the suffering of Black people can no longer be the moral impetus behind attempts to persuade whites to act right; the deaths of Black people should not serve as an ethical exercise through which whites choose the significance of and their culpability in Black genocide. As it stands now, whites, as a group, have not given African descended people in America any reason to believe they are interested or serious about mass social political change, and as such we (African descended people in America) should not construct a false hope in their intangible good intentions. The philosophizing of Blacks with whites does not stop the ways in which the "white racial frames" delay and bracket the urgency of the conversation. African descended people are dying in America without majoritarian remorse or regard in their public executions.

African descended people in America are confronted with not only the reality of anti-black discrimination, but also the intentional incarceration and systemic genocidal elimination of our people. Katrina helped many Americans glimpse what social science has made painfully clear. Blackness, badness, violence, and criminality are closely linked in the minds of most Americans.<sup>18</sup> These negative associations with Blackness usually operate outside our conscious awareness; our stereotypes and prejudices do not feel chosen. But the effects are real, and the absence of conscious "choice" does not imply an absence of responsibility. The institutional dereliction of the U.S. government in Hurricane Katrina lets African descended people in America know one thing, namely that race still matters in

the United States. Regardless of the alleged sympathy various white academics may share with the “race problem,” the ways of looking at people of color philosophically perpetuates the victimization of Blacks under rhetoric of class, sex, and other general claims of societal oppression that work against efforts to confirm the centrality of racial discrimination and the incremental genocide of Africans in America. As Ahati N. N. Toure says,

the aftermath of the Hurricane Katrina disaster has highlighted the continuing modality of domination that uncloaks the equation between Americanization and colonization and imperial control. . . . Despite the superficial changes in U.S. constitutional arrangements, Afrikans remain legally and constitutionally vulnerable to exploitation, dismissal, and enslavement by the European settlers and alienated from the determination of the public policy initiatives and priorities of the American state.<sup>19</sup>

***Why can't we all just get along? Because you keep Killing Blacks!***

In most studies of American violence, very little is said concerning the historical and political nature of white violence against African Americans. In fact, it is ignored and barely mentioned in the footnotes of American history. Why do whites feel that it is necessary to kill Blacks? What is the root of this idea? Is it everlasting and if so what is the position of African descended people in America in this struggle for survival? Their position is one of the victims. A. J. William Myers continues that:

There have been 400 years of destructive impulses with a deadly force, both overtly and covertly that has brought the country to this position of race relations—practically where it all began: through the holocaust of the middle passage and the genocide of racial slavery. Black people are still being brutalized. Black people are still being murdered. Black people are still being dehumanized—it is still open season on African Americans.<sup>20</sup>

In America, the population has just accepted the fact that African descended people in American will be killed by drugs, through poverty, under incarceration, or at the hands of whites in an effort to protect their communion. Racial profiling, disparate criminal sentences and the need of security against the foreign invaders mandate that legal adjustment is made to protect the sacred “communion of whiteness”<sup>21</sup> against the assaults of the cultural other. In fact, white violence is justified against the other in exactly this way.

Whites within the communion shudder at the fact of having to encounter Blacks—especially young Black men—in their walks through the city or on public transportation. Their psychological state of mental deprivation and/or racial paranoia, has convinced them that an assault with a deadly weapon is imminent. In most cases they will move on beyond the Black whose path they crossed, but find them assaulted by one of their own. In such a psychological state of mental deprivation, all whites pose a physical threat to Blacks. But then again, is not this the reality in the communion that all [whites] come together to enforce the racial establishment . . . every [white is] a policeman in the face of every black person<sup>22</sup>.

This sustained aversion against Blacks justifies violence. The need for whites to protect the conditions that sustain “whiteness” constructs the encounter with “a Black” as a danger. Violence against “the Black” is justified on the basis of this exclusion. It is the African descended person in America that suffers from the order attained through the legal mob violence against Black communities in this country. Democracy is believed to work at an affordable price in this country, at the price of African descended people’s lives,<sup>23</sup> which is rationalized by whites as nothing more than the necessary elimination of the dangers Blacks pose to white communities.<sup>24</sup> The commitment that whites have shown to the preservation of their oppressive historical legacy of civilization and the protection of the ideals that sustain the racist American society demonstrates the fundamental aversion whites have to African descended people.

The work by historical Black figures, such as Martin R. Delany, John E. Bruce and Frantz Fanon, which has suggested that whites will always seek to oppress and claim the lives of African people as a function of the colonial context, has been confirmed in the contemporary works of African centered theorists as Marimba Ani, and Kobi K. K. Kambo. As Marimba Ani remarks in *Yurugu*, “the European (European American) is capable of doing anything to destroy people of African descent, as so long as it is perceived to be in the European interest.”<sup>25</sup> This disposition of the European manifests the psychological as the behavioral. As Kobi K. K. Kambo argues, “the fundamental thrust of the European worldview at the level of human relations is “anti-African.”<sup>26</sup> This anti-African disposition is not simply a mental activity that sustains the physical brutalization of African descended people, it is the entelechy that European people historically acted upon to justify their treatment of non-Europeans the world over. While it is certainly true that the physical death of African people throughout the world have come at the hands of whites, the perpetuation of Eurocentrism, especially white anti-Black racism in



America has continued to perpetuate genocide against African descended people through rampant poverty, drugs in Black communities, the prolific incarceration of people of color, and the political and social muting of Black sufferings under American colonization. As evidenced by Katrina, the conditions that would allow people of African descent to be dehumanized and involuntarily expatriated are sustained by an indifference to the death and suffering of Blacks. Genocide in this sense not only refers to the actual physical killings of Blacks by whites, but the sustained social and economic conditions that have been created by whites as a product of slavery, segregation and post-civil Rights policy.

The rationalizations for the death and oppression of African people in America are no different now than they were during slavery in the 1800s and segregation for most of the twentieth century. If the Black scholar confronts this unchanging reality, in which whites have a psychologically sustained aversion to "Blacks," then it becomes necessary to ask how we can philosophically justify excluding the possibility of violent revolution, when we know from the last fifty-three years that integration and moral suasion has failed to end white supremacy or the oppression of our people. The question placed before the African thinker in the United States is the same question posed to our ancestors, "what are African people to do given the unrelenting assault on our lives in America?"

## II. Towards a Critical Race Fanonianism

The long historical presence of anti-Black racism has led various scholars in the recent past to attempt to explain the development of the racial worldview in America,<sup>27</sup> and the persistence of these negative Black images in the white imagination.<sup>28</sup> Given the continuance of these historical problems with anti-Black racism, these works should not be looked upon with any less regard, since they speak to the racial situation in America just as much now as they did then. In current scholarship, contemporary movements like Critical Race Theory (CRT) have insisted that the persistence of anti-Black racism is the unconscious expression of the white racial identity.<sup>29</sup> Either way, the African person in America is confronted with the racial legacy of America systemically etched in the performance of the white racial identity.

According to Ronald Hall, racism is best understood as "the efforts of a dominate race group to exclude a dominated race group from sharing in the material and symbolic rewards of status and power."<sup>30</sup> Racism, in sharp contrast to its common usage, "exists only because of the actual presence of oppressed races."<sup>31</sup> Racism, then, is systemically tangible, and experientially objective-(fy-ing), an experienced reality whose severity can only be gauged by the suffering

of those who brave the conditions of poverty, political marginalization, and dehumanization created by racial oppression; in this regard, the dominant group's perception of racism's existence and their culpability in its actuality produce little weight in a true understanding of racial oppression. Over thirty years ago, Joel Kovel said, "Racism is ultimately indivisible from the rest of American life."<sup>32</sup> "Today, as in the past," says Joe R. Feagin, reiterating Kovel's claim, "systemic racism encompasses a broad range of white-racist dimensions: the racist ideology, attitudes, emotions, habits, actions, and institutions of whites in this society. Thus systemic racism is far more than a matter of racial prejudice and individual bigotry. It is a material, social, and ideological reality that is well-imbedded in major U.S. institutions,"<sup>33</sup> and enforced through white racial framing.<sup>34</sup> Simply stated, the anti-Black racism that America has come to know and love is fundamentally cultural.

Some readers in philosophy will no doubt seek to compare this analysis to Charles Mills's *Racial Contract*, however, it should be pointed out that the cultural analysis proposed under the notion of Critical Race Fanonianism does not seek to act as a "conceptual bridge" between "white ethics and political philosophy" and "the world of Native American, African American and Third and Fourth World political thought."<sup>35</sup> In fact, the cultural analysis proposed under a Critical Race Fanonianism would be at odds with Mills's project. Mills claims that the "'Racial Contract' recognizes the actuality of the world we live in," and "does not find it remarkable that racism has been the norm and that people think of themselves as raced rather than abstract citizens . . .,"<sup>36</sup> but if this is true, how can he accept the role that racial logics play in maintaining the Racial Contract while simultaneously appealing to an unfounded optimism, a hopefulness in white sympathies with the oppressed?

Despite Mills's conviction that "racism (global white supremacy) is itself a political system, a particular power structure of formal or informal rule, socioeconomic privilege, and norms for the differential distribution of material wealth and opportunities, benefits and burdens, rights and duties,"<sup>37</sup> Mills still pretends that there is a justifiable reason to appeal to the ethical sensibility of whites to remedy their own supremacy. For Mills, "Naming this reality brings it into necessary theoretical focus for these issues to be honestly addressed."<sup>38</sup> But what about those who choose not to recognize Mill's picture drawn by the Racial Contract and choose to continue "the epistemology of ignorance required by the original Racial Contract?"<sup>39</sup> How does the naming, the "double signification of the Black vernacular,"<sup>40</sup> and the "demystification of the lies of white theory"<sup>41</sup> reverse the historical inclinations of the white racial frame to rationalize, reconstruct and

legitimize the structural inequities of white privilege? Does the reading of the *Racial Contract* or its public utterances change white identity? Unfortunately, it cannot, since it is white culture that the Black philosopher is appealing to in his cry to be heard. As Kovel insightfully points out, "Culture is an organism and nothing goes on within it without regulative effect on all else. Whatever exists within a culture has a function: we may heap ethical condemnation upon it, but the ethical condemnation has a function insofar as it is derived from the main sources of cultural power and serves to regulate the evil, not to replace it. Culture then adapts only to maintain its potency, otherwise it will not change."<sup>42</sup> Whites will not change the conditions of the American racial system, unless that change converges with their interests.<sup>43</sup> White socialization reproduces white ways of life, white values, and an ideology of white superiority engrained in the narratives and history of American society. Even causal analyses of racial events in American society are framed in ways that uphold white sensibilities of justice and fairness, especially when those events would imply racism as the cause. Empirically, whites will not lend Blacks their ear.

To date, in the age of social constructionism, Black scholars have not undertaken a conceptual project that links the cultural rootedness of white racism to the construction and maintenance of racist social structures. As it stands now, the intersection between Derrick Bell's racial realist account of American democracy and Fanon's cultural analysis of the white colonial cultural disposition remains unarticulated. While it is certainly the case that many Black theorists have written about the historical development of race, the psychology of the European mind, and the social construction of race, few if any have argued that the cultural disposition of whites have determined and constructed the social structures of racism that confront us today. In this instance, social construction is not only the thesis that humans can create the world, but a more particular claim that argues that whites have created an anti-black world that is married to and developed as the material expression of their very culture.

Critical Race Fanonianism<sup>44</sup> asserts, in the tradition of the racial realist position, that while "racism is an integral, permanent, and indestructible component of this society,"<sup>45</sup> this social political realization in itself fails to further Black scholarship in its study, or create the visceral political impetus behind amelioratory revolt. In an effort to understand American racism in ways that open up political solutions, which may include violence, and ground emerging Black social theory in realistic approaches that recognize the permanence of anti-Black racism, Black scholarship must change the orientation of inquiry when dealing with race as a social political reality. Fanon is clear,

To study the relations of racism and culture is to raise the question of their reciprocal action. If culture is the combination of motor and mental behavior patterns arising from the encounter of man with nature and his fellow man, it can be said that racism is indeed a cultural element. There are thus cultures with racism and cultures without racism.<sup>46</sup>

Once we (as African descended people) come to grips with the endemic nature of American racism, our theories about race should reflect a philosophically rigorous position that encounters American racism as sempiternal, while seeking true liberation from the white social context, the ideology of hopeful co-existence, and a forced engagement with the whites that perpetuate the ills of anti-Black racism. "Liberation is the total destruction of the colonial system,"<sup>47</sup> and the theories of liberation that result from the acknowledgement of reality, must demand the same practical rigor. African scholars cannot continue to produce scholarship steeped in performative contradictions, since it is the descriptive knowledge of white solidification and its racist immobility that refutes the ideal hope in white sympathy. If we [Black scholars] know that racism is permanent, that whites have not been persuaded by moral appeals for justice, and equality for the last 400 years, and are confronted with the quotidian reality of Black impoverishment and death, then why do we place such faith and intellectual dependence in white revelation? Currently, our social political philosophies and legal strategies rest on the illusion of universal human entitlements and the false hope that whites will voluntarily surrender power, privilege, and their economic interests in Black subjugation in the effort to respect Black humanity. Derrick Bell's insight is prophetic. "The American dogma of automatic progress fails for those who have been marginalized."<sup>48</sup> American society is simply not structured to provide racial equality; "racial equality is, in fact, not a realistic goal,"<sup>49</sup> it is quite simply a dilapidated catch phrase of an aging Black demographic deluded by the hope of white rationality, Christian faith, and the social promises of American democracy.

In philosophy, this naiveté is supplemented by appeals to specific subversive figures like Foucault or Marx to draw out the problems of the classist, gendered power dynamic in the American political system, all the while ignoring Derrick Bell's insight that "[economically disadvantaged] whites, rather than acknowledge the similarity of disadvantages [with Blacks], particularly when compared with that of better off whites, are easily diverted into protecting their sense of entitlement vis-à-vis blacks for all things of value. Evidently, this racial preference expectation is hypnotic."<sup>50</sup> African people in America cannot continue to base their political strategies and theoretical social models on the rejection of the white

race consciousness. "Race consciousness of this character . . . makes it difficult for whites 'to imagine the world differently,'"<sup>51</sup> while simultaneously demanding an orientation to the white communion. Bell is clear on this matter.

Black people will never gain full equality in this country. Even those Herculean efforts we hail as successful will produce no more than temporary "peaks of progress," short-lived victories that slide into irrelevance as racial patterns adapt in ways that maintain white dominance. This is a hard-to-accept fact that all history verifies. We must acknowledge it and move on to adopt policies based on what I call: "Racial Realism." This mind-set or philosophy requires us to acknowledge the permanence of our subordinate status. That acknowledgement enables us to avoid despair, and frees us to imagine and implement racial strategies that can bring fulfillment and even triumph.<sup>52</sup>

Accepting racial realism means that our philosophy, our mind-set, must look upon reality anew. As African descended people, we are inevitably confronted with ourselves in a Black reality, so as Blacks, we must create, and embrace new political strategies that focus on liberation, not incremental progress. Black intellectual efforts must be weighed against its potential for freedom, and the certainty of Black people's subjugation and death. Black social political theory must be guided by the harsh realities of anti-Black racism, not the idle faith of a "never-dawning tomorrow." Struggle is not enough. As Frantz Fanon reminds us: "Challenging the colonial world is not a rational confrontation of viewpoints. It is not a discourse on the universal, but the impassioned claim by the colonized that their world is fundamentally different."<sup>53</sup>

### III. Philosophy and the Black Man's Burden

The intellectual history of considering violence a political alternative against white domination is over 200 years old. In the course of African thought in America, the appeal to violence has been justified by the resistance of Native Ndn (American) peoples, and the empirical fact that despite African people's peaceful and moral appeal to whites, they continue to endure anti-Black oppression. In 1829, David Walker asked,

Why do they not get the Aborigines of this country to be slaves to them and their children, to worked for farms and dig mines? They know well that the Aborigines of this country (or Indians) would tear them from the earth. The Indians would not rest day

or night, they would be up all time of the night, cutting their cruel throats. But my colour (some not all) are willing to stand still and be murdered by the cruel whites.<sup>54</sup>

In his *Appeal*, Walker claims that violence is necessary to stop the murder of Blacks under the cruel and murderous Christian morality of whites that rationalized Black oppression as deemed by God.<sup>55</sup> Other Black intellectuals were not different at the turn of the nineteenth century. John E. Bruce, for example, a contemporary of W. E. B. Du Bois, expressed the same reasoning in 1889:

Under a no less Barbarous civilization than that which existed at that period of the world's history, let the Negro require at the hands of every white murderer in the South of elsewhere a life for a life. If they burn your houses, burn theirs. If they kill your wives and children, kill theirs. Pursue them relentlessly. Meet force with force everywhere it is offered. If they demand blood, exchange with them until they are satiated. . . . Organized resistance to organized resistance is the best remedy for the solution of the vexed problem of the century.<sup>56</sup>

Historically, the justifications for violence against whites are not motivated by an intrinsic hate of white people; the justifications are instead motivated by the valuing of African people and the intolerability of Black oppression, despite the invoked human compassions and illusions of civil, cultural and racial progress under colonial rule. These conversations about violence only exist because of the unrelenting victimization and murder of African people in America without arrest. This historical informing of violence contextualizes the concern that some critics of this position should have. Anti-Black racism is justified by the moral rationalizations of the "God Frame" and the "Theodicy of Black suffering." These rationalizations fill in the void of Black suffering in America and display the unchanging psychological position of whites that Blacks are not human and will not attain their humanity or equality in America. Who, then, are responsible for the consequences of these views?

Some authors have claimed that regardless of the racial discrimination, murder, and criminalization of Blacks in America, morality should ultimately be the guiding principle of African people's political action in the United States.<sup>57</sup> Where does this morality come from, and more importantly who decides that moral relevance comes from the possibility of white deaths and not the continuing deaths of Blacks? Violence is the response to conditions created through the solidification of the colonial situation and the perpetuation of whiteness.

According to Paul Butler, “the issue is not whether people will suffer and die. African Americans suffer and die now, because of race based punishment. The issues, then, are whether or how that discrimination should end, and whether it matters if others die, in the service to end discrimination.”<sup>58</sup> However, the issue is precisely over who dies. Butler claims that violence needs to be proportionate to the kind of discrimination committed<sup>59</sup> and should not harm innocent people or what he refers to as “noncombatants,”<sup>60</sup> but how can we decide how much oppression is tolerable and who is innocent under a colonial system? What is the threshold for dehumanization, what is the normal amount of genocide allowable? Butler assumes that discrimination can be weighed as abnormal variations in the American landscape, despite its perpetual reoccurrence. While this argument seems compelling it ignores the fundamental truth of the American colonial context,<sup>61</sup> namely that the murder of Blacks appears normal, and as such does not constitute a premise for rejecting the system or punishing those whites responsible for the death of Blacks.

Fanon tells us that there are no innocents in the colonial situation. “Colonialism is not a type of individual relation but the conquest of a national territory and the oppression of a people: that is all.”<sup>62</sup> The colonial context justifies itself to whites in the persecution and criminalization of Blacks, and in this way it knows that it is legitimate and permanent. Every white that participates in the colonial context, as if the tyranny against Blacks is the norm, and acceptable, in so far as it requires no individual action or culpability, is guilty of colonization, and as such is neither innocent nor absolved for being the particular manifestation of the colonial matrix. The possession of a white racial identity is a very real danger for African people insofar as that identity is embraced as the badge of white superiority. In this sense, every white is a concrete threat to the life of an African descended person, either as their executioner or the enforcer of white supremacy. Insofar as “whiteness” is the expectation of privilege, whiteness is also the expectation of those who cannot enjoy those privileges and the maintenance of their deprivation. Violence against whites is a revolt against both the colonial structures of the American context, as well as the rebellion against the individual whites who choose to claim the legacy of that oppression in a white racial identity.

### ***Why violence?***

In the American context, violence is the self-proclamation against social, cultural and economic domination manifested. Violence is the stance the African takes against the American context—the revolt against the very notions of existence that define Blackness as the absence given content only by the white frame, and the assertion of a people. Violence by the African against the imperial monotony

of European thought is philosophical, since it is the process through which the African, in acting against the white world, seeks to develop and determine a new reality,<sup>63</sup> that announces the conditions of cultural self-determination and the relations that arise from it. According to Fanon, “The colonized subject discovers reality and transforms it through his praxis, his deployment of violence and his agenda for liberation.”<sup>64</sup> Violence seeks to author a new world from the perspectives of the people, and sets in motion the search for truth. “For the people, only fellow nationals are ever owed the truth. No absolute truth, no discourse on the transparency of the soul can erode this position.”<sup>65</sup> Truth is created in the determination of a people to create a social world that is culturally sustaining; “truth is what hastens the dislocation of the colonial regime, what fosters the emergence of the nation.”<sup>66</sup>

The Black is a colonized African, incompatible with the racial order of America both in “their” very existence, in so far as a living Black is a contradiction to Blackness as the absence of whiteness, and to the extent that the possibility for liberation runs through their veins. The beats of their hearts are the bangs of discontent. The anger displayed in “Krumping,” and the horror of the streets shown in “Hip-Hop,” is well known to the Black, but hidden from the white. Violence is anger realized as liberation. “To blow the colonial world to smithereens is henceforth a clear image within the group and imagination of every colonial subject.”<sup>67</sup> This violence, in the American context, takes away the ability of whites to dream; it destroys their imaginations of the Black, and as such makes a formative declaration by the African descendent that “their world is fundamentally different.”<sup>68</sup> Violence demonstrates the will to create and sustain this different world.

In framing the world, whites create the Black, and the haunting specter that the African can never truly recognize as himself. In the American colonial context, Blackness is not an idle or rhetorical construct; to the contrary, Blackness is ontological device that acts categorically, animated by the imaginative consensus of whites to be the imposed reality of “Black people.” Under this veil, the colonized African descendent is trapped. The African cannot create a world independent of the colonial context, since it is the colonial condition that drives the African to seek an escape from Blackness, nor can he appeal to the colonial structure, since the structure gains its legitimacy from the appeals of the oppressed, who, in seeking humanity, seek to be embraced by the imagined world of whites as their own. It is here, when the white claims to know the Black, as a person, as an American, as a human that, as Fanon says, “the phrases such as ‘I know them,’ [and] ‘that’s the way they are,’ show this maximum objectification.”<sup>69</sup> The moment “the Black,” in choosing to be “that Black,” can speak comprehensibly to whites—where their



Blackness is no longer a veiled reality, and they are completely known to the white—the African is destroyed, since to be recognized by the white is to surrender the mystic of Africanity that remained unrecognizable. This is the situation that creates the need for decolonization.

“The war of liberation is not seeking for reforms but the grandiose effort of a people, which had been mummified, to rediscover its own genius, to reassume its history and assert its sovereignty.”<sup>70</sup> Decolonization, says Fanon, “infuses a new rhythm, specific to a new generation of men, with a new language and a new humanity,” where the “thing colonized becomes a man through the very process of liberation.”<sup>71</sup> The burden of freedom rests with those who are without it. It is in the longing to exist in the image of a people, as the heroes of one’s culture, and the courage to mold a cultural world that gives strength to the call for war. Violence against whites is not a mental act; it is the conscious organizing call for African descended people to act in concert, not for the destruction of a people, but for the creation of one. Violence is a concrete political act, just as the destruction of the colonial context is political action. “In its bare reality, decolonization reeks of red-hot cannonballs and bloody knives. For the last can be the first only after a murderous and decisive confrontation between the two protagonists.”<sup>72</sup> Liberation is to be had in the possibility of reflecting upon a world in which Blackness existed only as that nasty rumor. It is in the possibility of reflecting on the ever present reality of anti-Black racism that the role of philosophy is questioned.

### ***Then why do philosophy?***

Does philosophy have anything to offer African people suffering in America? Not as it is practiced now for two reasons. First, given that, “the epistemological criteria for determining what constitutes ‘proper’ practices and terms of discussion in philosophy are grounded socially, not transcendently,”<sup>73</sup> the socialization of white thinkers play a determining role in how the discipline can even begin to take up the issues of race and racism. The over-representation of whites in the field of philosophy, both dominate and exclude Black concerns from the canon, mirroring the marginalization of Blacks in the status quo. Second, the practice of philosophy is irrefutably at odds with the experience of Blacks in the United States. As Charles Mills states, “the peculiar features of the African-American experience are not part of the experience represented in the abstractions of European or Euro-America philosophers. And those who have grown up in such a universe, asked to pretend that they are living in the other, will be cynically knowing, exchanging glances that signify ‘there white folks go again.’”<sup>74</sup>

Philosophy does not have the tools to investigate race beyond the complexions of its practitioners. The investigations of race in philosophy are largely a

segregated activity. Black philosophers deal with race, and white philosophers deal with the (allegedly) more rigorous philosophical questions about human nature and experience. Under this academic apartheid, Black philosophers act as the missionaries of a moral cause, constantly trying to encourage white scholars to engage in “race theory,” and prove that African American philosophy is indeed a worthwhile philosophical canon. As Tommie Shelby notes, “African American philosophy is still largely marginalized. Many philosophers regard it as not real philosophy at all.”<sup>75</sup> Lucius Outlaw in particular has sought to respond to Shelby’s observation. Outlaw argues that African American philosophy is real as a particular historical philosophizing. In an attempt to distance the academic notion of philosophy from illusions of absolute truth and the transcendental, Outlaw argues that “philosophizing is a decidedly varied venture . . . , and is inherently contingent and conditioned socially and historically,”<sup>76</sup> where “no group of people, no race, is the paragon of humanity by virtue of philosophizing, nor is any race that ‘less developed’ relative to some supposed absolute standard manifested in a singular philosophy posing as absolute knowledge.”<sup>77</sup> This criticism is largely a discourse of redemption for philosophy, since the ultimate aim of Lucius Outlaw’s criticism is to advance the burgeoning transition of philosophy towards the realization of “racial and ethnic pluralism as a necessary condition for intellectual diversity.”<sup>78</sup>

Outlaw’s conclusion, much like the conclusions of Emmanuel Eze<sup>79</sup> and Charles Mills, maintains an elusive redemptive hope in the possibility that whites in philosophy will choose to value racial pluralism in spite of their unchanged racism towards Blacks. If Outlaw is correct that the “principles and norms for ordering social and individual life of a particular people are always conditioned by and relative to those interests,” then what evidence do Black thinkers have that lead us to believe that whites have an interest in giving up give up their privilege, or that their attachment to whiteness can be overcome through moral suasion? What is most unsettling for the upcoming Black philosopher is that the harshest criticisms made against European philosophy as a racist, an imperialist, and a marginalizing discipline still have not justified a complete break with the established traditions of philosophy that continue to produce flocks of white men and women dedicated to the preservation of Eurocentrism, and less than fifty Black Ph.D.s<sup>80</sup> to resist such a reification in the last decade.

Conversations about Blackness are immediately usurped by the attempts of whites to understand the problem of racism through analogies with whiteness.<sup>81</sup> Understanding the race problem is merely the attempt to make racism comparable to other (isms) that are more comfortable to whites. This analogous contrast by

the white thinker merely limits and tailors racism to the sensibility white thinkers use in their encounters with people of color. The use of race, sex or class analogies, what race theorists in philosophy called a post-colonial perspective, give “analogizers permission to make invisible and unimportant experiences that were central to the lives of others.”<sup>82</sup> In this way, whites will always theorize the centrality of their experiences in the “other.” Philosophical conversation, then, only perpetuates the appeal to white sensibility as the gauge of racial discourse.

How long have African people in America appealed to the moral sensibility of whites? How long have African people in America given their lives for rights that today are being challenged and rolled back at any and every turn? How long have white philosophers entertained radical political thought by asking questions that presuppose a humanist orientation and a language of democracy when no Black people were in the room? Philosophical conversations about the possibilities of Black liberation with whites are performed with a disingenuous graciousness; a graciousness that suspends the teleological impetus that brings African descended people to the conversation in the first place; a graciousness through which philosophy, in seeking to calm the voice of suffering, maintains that philosophizing is in itself proving that one is not as oppressed as the people they are philosophizing about. African descended scholars in America approach philosophy as a means to convince whites to stop enacting their whiteness, but “in the speaking” of the need for “Black liberation,” the white pretends that this is an impersonal conversation—an intellectual coalition building—talking about the other racist white people. In the act of philosophizing, many whites believe that their willingness to converse about race absolves them from their undisclosed participation in white privilege.

Philosophy, then, plants an illusory matrix over the Black reality, in which Black scholars are philosophizing about race as if the practice of philosophy separates Black thinkers from the racial and cultural concerns that justified the initial philosophical inquiry. As such, current Black philosophical engagements with race rooted in the humanist quest against racial identity are mentacidal, in that the Black, seeking to attain an objective distance from his/her racial orientation, retreats into the imaginary realm of an un-raced thinker. This act is an abstraction from reality in which the African seeks to think from the mind of the European, as if the mind of the European were his/her own. This is fundamentally self-destructive and self-deceptive since it assumes that the human position which (white) philosophers traditionally claim to think from is un-raced.<sup>83</sup>

However, when asking if philosophy is useful, it is always important to ask for whom, and when practiced by whom. While white philosophy is impotent to

constructively contribute to Black liberation, Black philosophers can certainly further the quest for liberation by thinking about the role of theory, the goals of praxis and the possibilities of a new cultural conscious in Black intellectual productions. As it stands now, African-centered theory is concretely grounded in history and psychology, but has failed to venture beyond these fields.<sup>84</sup> Critical Race Theorists and Black philosophers have a unique engagement with the world, and in that engagement can unearth the historical ideas and potential symbols needed for societal transformation. The confusion created in the historical appeal to racial equality and humanism in the fields of Black psychology, jurisprudence and Black social political thought needs to be corrected. The clarification of the social realities and what those realities demand can certainly be advanced by more rigorous theoretical underpinnings. Black philosophers and race theorists must come to terms with the inevitability of white racism and the permanence of white rationalizations against Black interests.

#### IV. Conclusion

Violence admits the harsh political realities of the legal and social institutions of America pushing African descended people toward the truth held in a racial realist account of the world. The decision to act violently is a calculated risk; it admits the unchanging reality of Black oppression and seeks to respond to that oppression in earnest. Derrick Bell argues that “we must realize, as our slave forebears did, that the struggle of freedom is at the bottom, a manifestation of our humanity which survives and grows stronger through resistance to oppression.”<sup>85</sup> In the past, our Ancestors courageously fought and resisted the narratives of Eurocentrism, today, however, the potential for liberation will be based on the shaking off of the multiculturalist dogma that is hanging over the heads that allows us to endure the death of African people in an effort to humanize the oppressor and love our enemy. Ultimately, the Black scholar must reconcile this question as an African descended person. Do we (African descended people) advocate the death, murder, poverty, and oppression of our people at the hands of whites, or do we advocate the end of racism, even if the means to do so is war?

The dissenters to such a view will no doubt support the basis of violence against whites as theoretically, and politically justified, but reject the proposal on the basis of practicality or morality. Here the criticisms that violence against whites will increase white racism, that violence against whites will inevitably harm more Blacks than our current oppression, that violence is simply not a promising political alternative for Black, or that violence against whites would make oppressed Blacks no better than the white oppressor are largely ideological co-signers to the

maintenance of the status quo. These criticisms only maintain the current conditions of Blacks now. Blacks are dying daily from poverty, police brutality and incarceration. Where are the objections to these realities? Is there an ontological difference between the deaths of Blacks that appear normal, and the deaths that appear abominable because they occurred in the midst of revolt? Does our willingness to be moral agents that seek to educate whites and live together peacefully arrest the murder of Black people? The reality of Blacks, especially Black men in American society, is that death is always imminent. Ultimately, the death of Blacks, be it at the hands of white supremacy, or in rebellion against colonialism, should advocate the unrealized possibility of their living, namely the end of racism.

## Notes

These words are the words of my father and my ancestor Huebby Davis. I speak because through them I have spoken. Our people have always asked for the strength not to touch our oppressors, because we have known that if we "lay our hands upon them" we would never be the same again. I would like to thank O'Donovan Johnson and James Haile for their feedback on this project, Dwayne Tunstall for his courage in being my co-presenter on violence at the 7th Biennial Radical Philosophy Conference, Dr. Kenneth Stickers for going over this argument tirelessly, and the reviewers of *Radical Philosophy Today* for their consideration of this controversial work.

1. Phillip C. Aka, "Analyzing U.S Commitment to Socio-Economic Human Rights," *Akron Law Review* 39 (2006): p. 417.
2. Stanley A. Haplin, "Looking Over a Crowd and Picking Your Friends: Civil Rights and the Debate Over the Influence of Foreign and International Human Rights Law on the Interpretation of the U.S Constitution," *Hastings International and Comparative Law Review* 30 (2006): 1.
3. Robert Cottrol and Raymond Diamond, "The Second Amendment: Toward an Afro-Americanist Reconsideration," *The Georgetown Law Review* 80 (1992): pp. 309–361.
4. Ali Khan, "Lessons From Malcolm X: Freedom by Any Means Necessary," *Howard Law Journal* 38 (1995): pp. 70–133.
5. A copy of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights can be found at [http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a\\_ceschr.htm](http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/a_ceschr.htm). Accessed August 7th, 2007.
6. Critical Race Theory (CRT) is distinctly different than the philosophical variety which is more adequately termed "critical theories of race." For the most part, philosophical works on race have neglected the writings of Derrick Bell, Kimberle Crenshaw, and Richard Delgado. For a definitive definition of CRT, see Mari Matsuda, Charles R. Lawrence, Richard Delgado and Kimberle Crenshaw, *Words that Wound: Critical Race Theory, Assaultive Speech, and the First Amendment* (Jackson: Westview Press, 1993). The originators of Critical Race Theory (CRT) held that CRT could not be understood as an abstract set of idea or principles, since "among its basic theoretical themes is that of privileging contextual and historical descriptions over transhistorical or purely abstract ones." *Ibid.*, p. 3. For these theorists "CRT consists of six identifying elements: (1) CRT recognizes that racism is endemic to American life. Thus the question is not how racial discrimination can be eliminated while maintaining the integrity of other interests implicated in the status quo. Instead we ask how these traditional interests and values serve as vessels of racial subordination, (2) CRT expresses skepticism toward dominate legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, color blindness, and meritocracy, (3) CRT challenges ahistoricism and insists on a

contextual/ historical analysis of the law, (4) CRT insists on the recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color and our communities of origin in analyzing law and society, (5) CRT is interdisciplinary and eclectic, and (6) CRT works toward the end of eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression." See *ibid.*, p. 6. Seven years later, this list was expanded to include the art of storytelling in which writers analyze the myths, presuppositions, and received wisdoms that make up the common culture about race and that invariably render blacks and other minorities one down. Starting from the premise that a culture constructs its own social reality in ways that promote its own self-interest, these scholars set out to use interest convergence as a methodological tool, which holds that white elites will tolerate or encourage racial advances for blacks only when such advances also promote white self-interest. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, eds., *Critical Race Theory: the Cutting Edge*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000), p. xvii.

7. Integration has failed on several fronts. The historical work in this area has convincingly demonstrated that *Brown v. Board* (1954) was nothing more than a political agenda pushed to increase American soft power during the Cold War Era. Mary Dudziak, "Desegregation as a Cold War Imperative," *Stanford Law Review* 41 (1988): 61; Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights: Race and the Image of American Democracy* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2002). The idea of racial equality is fundamentally bankrupt. Derrick Bell, *And We Are Not Saved: The Elusive Quest for Racial Justice* (New York: Basic Books, 1987); Derrick Bell, *Faces at the Bottom of the Well: The Permanence of Racism* (New York: Basic Books, 1992); Jeffrey Wallace, "John Bingham and the Meaning of the 14th Amendment Ideology v. Reality: The Myth of Equal Opportunity in a Color-Blind Society," *Akron Law Review* 36 (2003): 693. And desegregation worsened the education and economic viability of Black communities. Derrick Bell, *Silent Covenants: Brown v. Board of Education and the Unfilled Hopes for Racial Reform* (New York: Oxford, 2004); Jennifer L. Hochschild, *The New American Dilemma: Liberal Democracy and School Desegregation* (New York: Yale University Press, 1984).
8. While some white scholars may find it unconscionable for Black scholars to use the term "genocide" to describe the current Black/White racial condition in the United States, the utilization of this term is represented in legal literature by Critical Race Theorists, lawyers, and social scientists. Article II of The Genocide Convention defines the crime of genocide as "an act committed with intent to destroy, in whole or part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group and includes any of the following: a) killing members of the group, b) causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group, c) deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or part, d) imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group, and e) forcibly transferring children of the group to another group." For a discussion of African American vulnerability to violence due to governmental dereliction, and the right of Blacks to take up arms, see Cottrol and Diamond, "The Second Amendment: Toward an Afro-Americanist Reconsideration." For an interesting discussion of armed self defense, see Don Kates, "Genocide, Self-Defense, and the Right to Arms," *Hamline Law Review* 29 (2006): 501. Kates' argument for a new understanding of genocide that does not use the Holocaust as the standard is quite interesting.

Poverty is also a major area of focus in this research, since low socioeconomic status creates conditions that inevitably bring about the physical destruction of the Black race in America. "The effects of such a high rate of incarceration have been extremely debilitating to the African American community. These effects include the loss of male role models and fathers for African American youths; the loss of husbands and male companions for African American women; the loss of earnings and wealth for the African American community; the loss of membership of important African American organizations and institutions; the preclusion of educational and social development of the incarcerated; the encouragement of the spread of

AIDS. Indeed, arguably, the incarceration of such large numbers of Black prisoners is in itself an indication of genocide." Kenneth B. Nunn, "Darden Dilemma: Should African Americans Prosecute Crimes?" *Fordham Law Review* 68 (2000): 1473. Poverty was also the major impetus behind the push to recognize social rights in the United States, see Gay J. McDougall, "The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD): Introduction: Toward a Meaningful International Regime: the Domestic Relevance of International Efforts to Eliminate All Forms of Racial Discrimination." *Howard Law Journal* 40 (1997): 571.

9. Drew Christiansen, "Of Many Things," *America* 126, March 26, 2007; John Vasquez, "Ethics, Foreign Policy, and Liberal Wars: The Role of Restraint in Moral Decision Making," *International Study Perspectives* 6 (2005): pp. 307–315; Tomislav Ruby, "Making Moral Targeting Decisions in War: The Importance of Principal Agent Motivation Alignment and Constraining Doctrine," *Journal of Military Ethics* 5 (2006): pp. 12–31. Ruby speaks to the morality of killing noncombatants in pursuit of national goals.
10. Micheal Eric Dyson, *Come Hell or High Water: Hurricane Katrina and the Color of Disaster* (New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2006), p. 31.
11. *Ibid.*, pp. 13–14.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 33.
13. Jon Hanson and Kathleen Hanson, "The Blame Frame: Justifying (Racial) Injustice in America," *Harvard Civil Right-Civil Liberties Review* 41 (2006): pp. 415–480, pp. 456–457.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 462–468.
15. Dyson, *Come Hell or High Water*, pp. 179–201; Hanson and Hanson, "The Blame Frame," pp. 465–466.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 425.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 480.
18. Dyson, *Come Hell or High Water*, p. 165.
19. Ahati N. N. Toure, "Reflections on Paradigms in Power: Imperialism and Americanization as a Modal Relationship Explaining the Treatment of Afrikans in the United States During and After Hurricane Katrina," *Thurgood Marshall Law Review* 31 (2006): pp. 426–462, p. 461.
20. A. J. Williams-Myers, *Destructive Impulses* (Maryland: University Press of America, 1995), p. 107.
21. Williams-Myers, *Destructive Impulses*, pp. 71–79.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 110.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 10.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
25. Marimba Ani, *Yurugu: An African-Centered Critique of European Cultural Thought and Behavior* (Trenton: Africa World Press, 1994), p. 433.
26. Kobi K. K. Kambo, *African/Black Psychology in the American Context: An African Centered Approach* (Tallahassee: Nubian Nation Publications, 1998), p. 148.
27. For a discussion of the development of the racial worldview in America, see Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1993). This work is one of the most comprehensive articulations of the race construct in North America. For a more contemporary sociological understanding of American racism, see Joe R. Feagin, *Racist America* (New York: Routledge, 2001).

28. See George M. Fredrickson, *The Black Image in the White Mind: The Debate on Afro-American Character and Destiny, 1817–1914* (Middleton: Wesleyan University Press, 1971).
29. Charles R. Lawrence III, "The Id, the Ego, and Equal Protection: Reckoning with Unconscious Racism," in *Critical Race Theory: The Key Writings that Formed the Movement*, ed. Kimberle Crenshaw, Neil Gotanda, Gary Peller, and Kendall Thomas (New York: The New Press, 1995), pp. 235–256. The most recent attempt to link unconscious racism with whiteness under the rubric of Critical Race Theory has been attempted by Shannon Sullivan in her work *Revealing Whiteness: The Unconscious Habits of Racial Privilege* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2006). It is important to note that Sullivan's work which claims to investigate whiteness from a white, feminist, pragmatic-psycho-analysis fails to quote or even reference the work of Charles R. Lawrence.
30. Ronald Hall, "White Women as a Postmodern Vehicle of Black Oppression," *The Journal of Black Studies* 37 (2006): pp. 69–82, p. 71. This understanding of racism is structural. It does not view racism as a psychological phenomenon to be studied individually. For a discussion of the theoretical distinction, see Eduardo Bonilla-Silva, "Rethinking Racism: Toward a Structural Interpretation," *American Sociological Review* 62 (1996): pp. 465–480.
31. Joel Kovel, *White Racism: A Psychohistory*, 2nd.ed (New York: Columbia University Press, 1984/1970), p. 179.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 177.
33. Joe R. Feagin, *Systemic Racism: A Theory of Oppression* (New York: Routledge, 2006), p. 8.
34. According to Feagin, the white racial frame is "an organized set of racialized ideas, stereotypes, emotions and inclinations to discriminate. This white racial frame generates closely associated, recurring, and habitual discriminatory actions." *Ibid.*, p. 25. "Typically, old racist images, understandings, and related emotions become part of an individual white consciousness at an early age and, indeed, often exist in individual minds at a nonreporting and unconscious level. Thus, researchers have recently found that, when given a test or unconscious stereotyping, nearly 90 percent of whites who have taken the test implicitly associate the faces of Black Americans with negative words and traits such as evil character and failure" (*ibid.*, p. 26). This parallels the color-blind research on whites' perceptions of Affirmative Action, see Awad et al. "Attitudes Toward Affirmative Action: A Comparison of Colorblind Versus Modern Racist Attitudes," *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 35, (2005): pp. 1384–1399.
35. Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997), p. 4.
36. *Ibid.*, p. 130.
37. *Ibid.*, p. 3.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 132.
39. *Ibid.*, p. 133.
40. *Ibid.*, p. 131.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 132.
42. Kovel, *White Racism*, pp. 27–28.
43. For a discussion of interest convergence, see Derrick A. Bell Jr., "Brown v. Board of Education and the Interest Convergence Dilemma," in *Critical Race Theory*, and Mary Dudziak, "Desegregation as Cold War Imperative." For a discussion of "white habitus," or how whites rationalize their self-segregation, their views on inter-racial marriage, and their perceptions of racism, see Eduardo Bonilla-Silva et al., "When Whites Flock Together: The Social Psychology of White Habitus," *Critical Sociology* 32 (2006): pp. 229–253.



44. "The habit of considering racism as a mental quirk, as a psychological flaw, must be abandoned." Frantz Fanon, "Racism and Culture," in *Toward The African Revolution*, trans. Haakon Chevalier (New York: Grove Press, 1967), p. 38.
45. Derrick Bell, "The Racism is Permanent Thesis: Courageous Revelation or Unconscious Denial of Racial Genocide," *Capital University Law Review* 22 (1992): pp. 571–587, p. 573.
46. Fanon, "Racism and Culture," in *Toward the African Revolution* (see note 44), p. 32.
47. Frantz Fanon, "Toward the Liberation of Africa," in *Toward the African Revolution* (see note 44), p. 105.
48. Bell, *Faces at the Bottom of the Well*, p. 197.
49. Derrick Bell, "Racial Realism," *Connecticut Law Review* 24 (1992): pp. 363–379, p. 363.
50. Bell, "The Racism is Permanent Thesis," p. 575.
51. *Ibid.*
52. Bell, "Racial Realism," p. 373; Bell, "The Racism is Permanent Thesis; Derrick Bell, "Racism is Here to Stay," *Howard Law Journal* 35 (1991): pp. 79–93.
53. Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2004), p. 6. Some Fanon scholars would argue that there is not a strong notion of culture at work in Fanon's writings that could be used to maintain the strict division between two "cultures." In response to such a claim, I would argue that most Fanon scholars selectively read his work and place him in a narrow and anti-essentialist canon. For Fanon's opinion on the matter, see his essay "West Indians and Africans," in *Toward The African Revolution*, pp. 17–28.
54. David Walker, *The Appeal*, in *The Ideological Origins of Black Nationalism*, ed. Sterling Stuckey (Boston: Beacon Press, 1972), pp. 39–117, p. 100.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
56. John Edward Bruce, "The Application of Force," in *The Selected Writings of John Edward Bruce: Militant Black Journalist*, ed. Peter Gilbert (New York: Arno Press, 1971), pp. 29–32, p. 32.
57. Paul Butler, "By Any Means Necessary: Using Violence and Subversion to Change Unjust Law," *UCLA Law Review* 50 (2003): pp. 721–773, p. 723. Interestingly enough, Butler rejects the idea that violence against whites should not be undertaken because of a white backlash. Morality is the only reasonable objection to violence against whites, according to Butler.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 723.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 767.
60. *Ibid.*, pp. 768–773.
61. For an articulation of nationalist solutions to America's colonial problems, see Robert L. Allen, *Black Awakening in Capitalist America* (New Jersey: Africa World Press, 1990).
62. Frantz Fanon, "French Intellectuals and Democrats and the Algerian Revolution," in *Towards The African Revolution*, p. 81.
63. Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (New York: Grove Press, 1967), esp. chap. 7, pp. 217–222.
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66. *Ibid.*, p. 14.
67. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, p. 6.
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73. Lucius Outlaw, *On Race and Philosophy* (New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 201.
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79. Emmanuel Eze, *Achieving Our Humanity: The Idea of a Postracial Future* (New York: Routledge, 2001).
80. National Opinion Research Center: Survey of Earned Doctorates 1997–2005, at <http://www.norc.org/projects/Survey+of+Earned+Doctorates.htm>. Retrieved March 23, 2007. The analysis of the multiple reports spanning 1997–2005 reveals on that only 47 doctorate degrees have been awarded to African Americans.
81. Trina Grillo and Stephanie M. Wildman, "Obscuring the Importance of Race: The Implication of Making Comparisons between Racism and Sexism (Or Other-isms)," *Duke Law Journal* 40 (1991): pp. 397–412.
82. *Ibid.*, p. 409.
83. Bobby Wright, *The Psychopathic Racial Personality and Other Essays*, pp. 31–38.
84. For a discussion of the academic presence of African-centered thinking, see Kevin Cokely, "Afrocentricity and African Psychology," in *Afrocentricity and the Academy: Essays on Theory and Practice*, ed. J. Conyers (Jefferson: MacFarland and Company Publishers, 2003), pp. 141–162. On page 144, Cokely states "Aside from the discipline of history, there is perhaps no greater intellectual presence of Afrocentricity than in psychology."
85. Bell, "Racial Realism," p. 302.